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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON PRESIDENT BUSH'S TRIP TO EUROPE, MARCH  
1, 2005

1. Editorial in Tegucigalpa-based moderate daily "El Herald" on 2/27, titled "George W. Bush and 'Old Europe'." "U.S. President George W. Bush, still euphoric after his second inauguration and trying to focus the world's attention on the democratic front that the January 30 elections pretended to give to the face of occupied Iraq, made his anticipated trip to reconcile with 'Old Europe'."

"Besides visiting the European countries which openly opposed the Iraq invasion, Bush also presented himself as an apostle of freedom in some former Soviet countries, to the extent of diplomatically scolding Vladimir Putin, who has seemed to go back to the discourse and actions characteristic of the Cold War."

"At the end of his European tour, Bush can feel satisfied with his accomplishments, because somehow he got the commitment of some European countries to help the U.S. in Iraq, either directly or indirectly, especially where Europe has its own particular interests which often coincide with those of Washington. However, everything seems to point out that Old Europe wants to be treated as an equal partner, so that the neo-conservatives who are now in control of the White House would have to restrain their expansionist urges."

Palmer